CLAIMS

1.   A method of providing media content information in a system comprising at least a querying device (CP) and a serving device (MS) which
5   uses a content directory service (CDS) to store media content information, the method comprising the steps of:
        retrieving selected media content information from the content directory service (CDS) of the serving device (MS); and,
        storing the retrieved media content information (V-CDS) for future
10   querying by the querying device.

2.   A method according to claim 1 wherein the step of retrieving selected media content information uses knowledge of what media content information the querying device requires.
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3.   A method according to claim 2 further comprising obtaining
, knowledge of what media content information the querying device requires.

4.   A method according to claim 3 further comprising interrogating
20   the querying device to determine the knowledge of what media content information the querying device requires.

5.   A method according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising reorganising the retrieved media content information into a form
25   which is more compatible with the querying requirements of the querying device.

6.   A method according to claim 5 wherein the step of reorganising the media content information comprises reorganising the media content
30   information in a manner which is more compatible with the user interface of the querying device.

7.   A method according to claim 5 or 6 wherein the step of reorganising the media content information uses knowledge of the querying device.

8.   A method according to claim 7 further comprising obtaining knowledge of the querying device.

9.   A method according to claim 8 wherein knowledge of the querying device is obtained by interrogating the querying device.

10.   A method according to claim 8 wherein knowledge of the querying device is obtained by analysing queries made by the querying device.

11.   A method according to claim any one of claims 5 to 10 wherein the step of reorganising the media content information comprises reorganising the media content information so that it can be searched by the querying device.

12.   A method according to any one of claims 5 to 11 wherein the reorganised data is stored in a plurality of different formats, each format being compatible with a different querying device.

13.   A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the steps of retrieving media content information and storing the retrieved media content information are performed on a periodic basis.

14.   A method according to claim 13 further comprising the step of receiving an indication from a serving device when an update occurs to that device's CDS and updating the reorganised media content information in response to receiving the indication.

15.   A method according to any one of claims 5 to 14 wherein the steps of retrieving and reorganising the media content information are performed by a first device and the step of storing the reorganised media content information is performed on a second device.

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16.   A method according to any one of the preceding claims which is performed for a plurality of querying devices, wherein the step of retrieving selected media content information retrieves media content information required by the plurality of devices.

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17.   A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the step of retrieving information retrieves media content information from the CDS of a plurality of serving devices.

15   18.   A method according to claim 16 wherein the step of reorganising the media content information reorganises the media content information from the plurality of serving devices according to a common set of criteria.

19.   A method according to any one of the preceding claims further
20 comprising:
        receiving a query for media content information from the querying device;
        determining whether the stored media content information is sufficient to answer the query and, in the event that the stored media content information is
25 not sufficient, causing the required media content information to be retrieved from the CDS of the serving device.

20.   Software for causing a processor to perform the method according to any one of the preceding claims.

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21.   Apparatus for performing the method according to any one of the preceding claims.

22.   Apparatus for providing media content information in a system comprising at least a querying device (CP) and a serving device (MS) which uses a content directory service (CDS) to store media content information, the apparatus comprising:

     means for retrieving (26) selected media content information from the content directory service (CDS) of the serving device (MS); and,

     means for storing (V-CDS) the retrieved media content information for future querying by the querying device (CP).

23.   Apparatus according to claim 22 wherein the retrieving means (26) uses knowledge of what media content information the querying device (CP) requires.

24.   Apparatus according to claim 23 further comprising means for obtaining knowledge of what media content information the querying device (CP) requires.

25.   Apparatus according to claim 24 wherein the means for obtaining knowledge is arranged to interrogate the querying device to determine the knowledge of what media content information the querying device requires.

26.   Apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 25 further comprising means for reorganising the retrieved media content information into a form which is more compatible with the querying requirements of the querying device.

27.   Apparatus according to claim 26 wherein the reorganising means is arranged to reorganise the media content information in a manner which is more compatible with the user interface of the querying device.

28.   Apparatus according to claim 26 or 27 wherein the reorganising means uses knowledge of the querying device.

29.   Apparatus according to claim 28 further comprising means for obtaining knowledge of the querying device.

30.   Apparatus according to claim 29 wherein the means for obtaining knowledge of the querying device is arranged to interrogate the querying device.

31.   Apparatus according to claim 29 wherein the means for obtaining knowledge is arranged to analyse queries made by the querying device.

32.   Apparatus according to any one of claims 26 to 31 wherein the reorganising means is arranged to reorganise the media content information so that it can be searched by the querying device.

33.   Apparatus according to any one of claims 26 to 32 wherein the reorganised data is stored in a plurality of different formats, each format being compatible with a different querying device.

34.   Apparatus according to any one of claims 26 to 33 wherein the retrieving means and reorganising means are located on a first device and the storing means are located on a second device.

35.   Apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 34 which provides a service for a plurality of querying devices, wherein the retrieving means retrieves selected media content information required by the plurality of devices.

36.   Apparatus according to claim 35 which is physically separate from the querying devices.

37. Apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 36 wherein the retrieving means is arranged to retrieve media content information from the CDS of a plurality of serving devices.

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38. Apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 37 further comprising:

means for receiving a query for media content information from the querying device;

10 means for determining whether the stored media content information is sufficient to answer the query and, in the event that the stored media content information is not sufficient, causing the required media content information to be retrieved from the CDS of the serving device.

15 39. A method, software or apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the system is a Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) system.